

We claim:

1. A configurable alarm system, comprising at least one user interface which interfaces with:
 - at least one alarm sensor;
 - a dispatch configuration system through which a user configures an alarm notification parameter, wherein said alarm notification parameter defines a primary action to be executed if a pre-defined alarm event occurs; and
 - an automated dispatch mechanism, wherein said automated dispatch mechanism executes said primary action upon occurrence of said pre-defined alarm event.
2. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, further comprising multiple alarm notification parameters, wherein each of said alarm notification parameters defines a distinct primary action to be executed based on a distinct pre-defined alarm event associated with each of said alarm notification parameters.
3. The configurable alarm system of claim 2, wherein each of said alarm notification parameters is independent of the other of said alarm notification parameters.
4. The configurable alarm system of claim 2, wherein at least two of said alarm notification parameters correspond to one pre-defined alarm event, and define at least two different primary actions to be executed based on said one pre-defined alarm event.
5. The configurable alarm system of claim 4, wherein said at least two different primary actions are executed in parallel.
6. The configurable alarm system of claim 4, wherein said at least two different primary actions are executed consecutively.
7. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, further comprising a secondary

alarm notification parameter defining at least one secondary action to be executed.

8. The configurable alarm system of claim 7, wherein said secondary action is executed in the event said primary action fails.

9. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, wherein said primary action comprises a notification to a first person defined by said user.

10. The configurable alarm system of claim 9, further comprising a notification to a second person defined by said user in the event said first person cannot be contacted.

11. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, further comprising transfer of a data packet to a pre-defined location upon occurrence of said pre-defined alarm event.

12. The configurable alarm system of claim 11, wherein said data packet comprises information relating to said pre-defined alarm event.

13. The configurable alarm system of claim 12, wherein said information is used to authenticate said pre-defined alarm event prior to executing said primary action.

14. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, wherein said primary action activates a camera which transmits an image of the vicinity proximate to said alarm sensor to a pre-defined location.

15. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, wherein said interface is remotely connected to said dispatch configuration system.

16. The configurable alarm system of claim 15, wherein said interface is remotely connected to said dispatch configuration system via the Internet.

17. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, further comprising a electronically retrievable status indicator.
18. The configurable alarm system of claim 17, wherein said status indicator comprises an automated call in server providing call-in status capability to determine a status of a monitored area.
19. The configurable alarm system of claim 1, wherein said alarm notification parameters are downloaded from a database containing a plurality of pre-defined alarm notification parameters.
20. A system for handling an alarm event, comprising the steps of:
 - providing an interface device for communicating with at least one alarm sensor, a dispatch configuration system and a dispatch mechanism;
 - configuring said dispatch configuration system with an alarm notification parameter, said alarm notification parameter defining a primary action to be executed if a pre-defined alarm event occurs; and
 - automatically executing said primary action upon occurrence of said pre-defined alarm event.
21. The system of claim 20, further comprising the step of providing multiple alarm notification parameters, each of said alarm notification parameters defining different primary actions to be executed based on a single pre-defined alarm event.
22. The system of claim 20, further comprising the step of validating the occurrence of said pre-defined alarm event prior to executing said primary action.
23. The system of claim 22, further comprising the step of proceeding with said primary action if validation does not occur within a pre-determined period of time.

24. The system of claim 22, further comprising the step of proceeding with a back-up action if validation does not occur within a pre-determined period of time.
25. The system of claim 22, wherein said validating step comprises:
 - sending a user an image of an area proximate to said alarm sensor upon notification of an occurrence of said pre-defined alarm event to a user to confirm said occurrence of said pre-defined event; and
 - prompting said user to authorize at least one of said different primary actions.
26. The system of claim 21, further comprising the step of prioritizing said multiple alarm notification parameters based on user input variables.
27. The system of claim 26, wherein said user input variables are time periods, and wherein each time period is associated with one of said primary actions.
28. The system of claim 20, further comprising the step of providing a status indicator to said user.
29. The system of claim 28, wherein said step of providing a status indicator to said user is provided via said user calling an automated status server upon occurrence of said pre-defined alarm event.